

THE SONGS THAT ARE UNSUNG

POEMS

by

JOHN B. COLWELL, M.D.

UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS LIBRARY
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

With my warm regards,

John B. Colwell

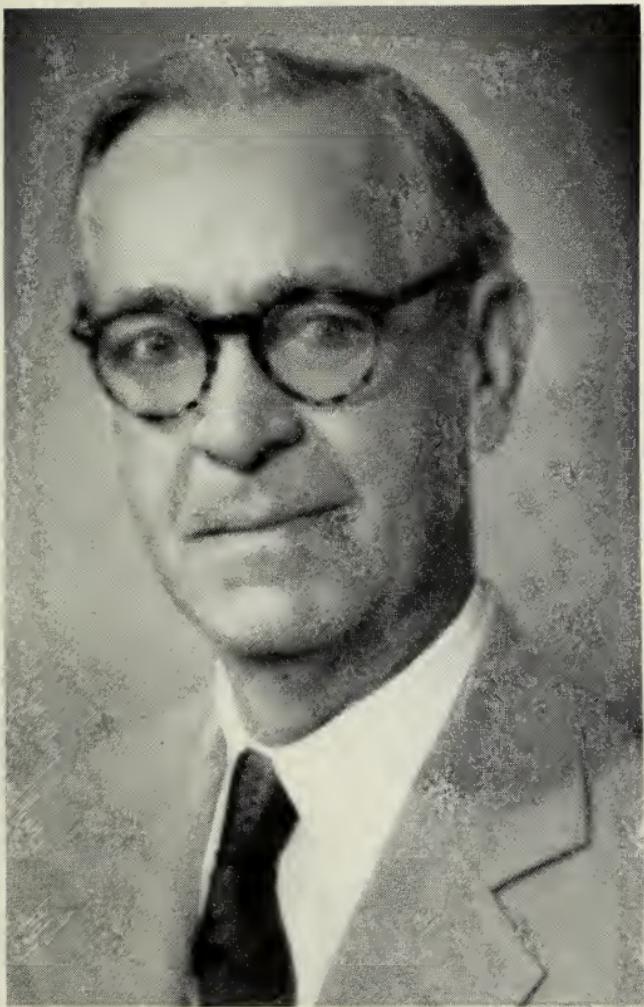
The Songs That Are Unsung



Poems by
John B. Colwell, M. D.

Colwell Publishing Co.
115 W. University Ave., Champaign, Ill.

**COPYRIGHT,
1957
BY COLWELL PUBLISHING CO.**



JOHN B. COLWELL, M.D.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John Bruner Colwell was born on February 24, 1873, in Harristown, Illinois, a few miles west of Decatur. He was one of the sons of Rev. John Bennett Colwell and his wife, Mrs. Charlotte Ijams Colwell. His father was a Methodist preacher of the group popularly called "Circuit Riders" because they served several locations at the same time, and usually rode "horse-back" to and from their country appointments because of poor roads. These locations were often several miles apart. Generally the preaching was done in a country school-house, as country churches were very rare in those days, and often the sermon, where there was no school-house, was delivered in some farmer's home. Rev. Colwell was a member of the "Illinois Conference" for more than forty years. Mrs. Colwell was the mother of eight children, three of whom died in infancy. The Colwell children who reached adult age were Lewis, Mary Ella, Arthur, John, and Clyde. Of this list only two are living at this date, 1956. The two survivors are John, the author of this sketch, and Clyde, a practicing lawyer, located in Chicago.

John graduated from the Virden, Illinois High School in 1892. Following this he taught school in the Country Schools of McLean County, Illinois, for two years. The first of these two schools was located a considerable distance from any town, but he found a farmer's home not far from the school where the people agreed to board him for the time he would be engaged at the school. In this home the family were adults with college experience, which provided not only the physical things that made for comfort, but a mental intelligence of wide awake people. In short, it was an excellent place to board. The school itself was small, as I recall, it consisted of about twenty children between the ages of seven and fifteen years. At this particular school, previous to my engagement two or three years, there had been two or three pupils,

almost young men, who had been very difficult to manage. Their behavior gave the teacher a lot of trouble, and the school a reputation of being a "tough" school. After these young fellows stopped their schooling, there was a different spirit in the school. John had no trouble whatsoever. The children were very obedient and respectful. The County Superintendent visited this school early in the fall after school opened. He was amazed at the excellent way the school behaved. Having known of it as a "tough" school, he told someone, who relayed his saying to me, "Colwell has sure straightened out that school". This made Colwell laugh. He has always thought the above incident prompted the Superintendent to help him get a better paying school, the second year of his teaching.

This second school was two miles out from a nice little town where John found a comfortable place to board. He planned to walk every school day, out and back from school, and in fact did so. Here he also acted as janitor of the school building, sweeping it in the evening after school was dismissed, and dusting in the morning before the children arrived. His pupils at this school were largely of German parentage. Most of the farms in that vicinity were owned by members of a German religious sect. The children were well behaved and intelligent. Their parents wanted their children to learn to speak and to write English as well as German, which was used in the homes, and the children themselves desired to speak the English language.

Teaching in these two schools seemed to stimulate John's desire for more advanced learning. After he had given considerable thought to it, he decided to apply for entrance into the Illinois Wesleyan University located in Bloomington, Illinois. He made application for admission in the fall of 1894 and was admitted to the Freshman Class of that year. He continued with his class through four years, and gradu-

ated with it in the spring of 1898. During his time at the Wesleyan, he had taken a considerable amount of chemistry training, and this pointed him toward medicine. At the Wesleyan he was invited to join the Sigma Chi Fraternity, and become a Sig, which he did.

Deciding to study for an M.D. degree, John went to Chicago and entered Rush Medical College. He was most fortunate here, to enlist the attention of one of the prominent professors of this school, who became a helpful friend in many ways. At Rush, John was elected the "poet" of his class. He produced a poem which he read at a meeting of the class. It recounted many of the events which had particularly interested his class, but would be of no interest to others. He has forgotten exactly the number of Rush graduates there were in his class, but it was more than one hundred. In a communication from a member of this class some time during the past year, this fellow classman stated that there were more than fifty of the 1902 class of Rush Medical still living. This is the class with whom Colwell received his M.D. degree, some 54 years ago.

Soon after this graduation in "Medicine", John entered a written competitive examination given by the Cook County Board of Examiners for the position of Assistant Warden, at the Cook County Hospital. As this hospital is one of the large hospitals in the United States, such a position as it offered was a real plum to a young doctor. John received the highest grade of those who took this examination, and in due order was appointed to the office of Assistant to the Warden of Cook County Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. He held this position for about seven and a half years, living in the hospital, which at that time had some 1900 patients. It is probably much larger than that now, and still having to reject patients for lack of room. It was a wonderful experience for a young physician who is still very grateful for what he learned there.

After leaving the hospital John was married to Blanche Martin, who had been the head nurse in the Children's Department of the Cook County Hospital. John and his wife attempted to start practice in one of the suburbs of Chicago, but the money ran out and they soon decided they must find a place that really needed a physician. Both of us having been born in Illinois, and knowing rural life in Illinois, we looked for a place to live in rural Illinois. We wanted a place that had no doctor, but that wanted one, and that could, and would pay for service. We were most happy to find such a place in Illinois, in the northwest corner of Champaign County. They were ready to receive us, and as time went on we were so glad we were there, and not in the Chicago suburbs. We did not have time to wait, nor did we have to wait. Very soon there was a mild epidemic of Typhoid Fever; and plenty of distance calls to be made. We soon learned to love those people. They were simple and direct, honest and intelligent. They loved us and were proud to have us a part of their community. The president of the local bank of the village, came to me and handed me a bankbook, saying he thought perhaps I might need a little money to help out in settling down, and I could draw on the bank when I needed it. Did any of you readers ever have such an experience as that? Do you wonder why I loved that man?

From the very beginning of our location, we were busy. I bought a nice team of driving horses, which were very gentle, and became a real help in making country calls. When the springtime mud appeared, I had to use my team, for that Illinois mud doesn't believe in automobile travel, at least it did not at that time. Night calls to long distances had to be honored, and I equipped my buggy with a cylinder of gas, and a light fixture on the buggy top at the right side. With this I could send the light about a mile down the road ahead, on the darkest nights. Some-

times the darkness was so intense, one could not see the intersecting road, without light, and one always had to be careful the horses did not turn a corner at the wrong place.

One frosty night, when the road was frozen, after a snow which the wind had blown about, into drifts and bare roads, my team capered along on the bare roads very nicely. But presently the team had run into a drift some five or six feet deep. The horses were lunging, and I feared they might break the buggy tongue, or injure themselves. So I quickly jumped out of the buggy and rushed to the horses and quieted them, unhooked them from the buggy, and led them into the field at the side of the road, and tied them to the fence. Then I brought my horse blankets from the buggy, and put them over my horses — returned to my buggy which was deep into the drift, got my medical bags, and set out to follow the fence to a house which I reached rather promptly. It proved to be the home of the people who had called me. They sent their men down to get the horses, which they did, putting them in their barn out of the wind and cold, and removing the harness from the horses.

When the men returned to the house, I had already looked over the patient, and left medicine. But it was quite late and everyone went to bed — including myself. Next morning the men went to pull my buggy out of the drift and bring it up to the barnyard. After breakfast my team and buggy awaited me, and I got in the buggy and drove back home in the light of day. This story I relate to show the great kindness that pervades country people, as a general rule.

Mrs. Colwell, with her rich knowledge of nursing was able to insist upon helping out on many occasions. She was particularly appreciated in surgical cases that had to have bandaging and sterile dressings.

While living in this rural home we had great satisfaction with the simplicity of life, and the dependence of the people who were our neighbors. There

seemed no reason to lock doors, or to hide one's valuables. We enjoyed "Imogene" thoroughly, so much, even our good neighbor friends poked fun at us about her. Imogene was a beautiful Jersey heifer, which a friend of mine who was enjoying his farming interests some 50 to 75 miles south of our location, shipped up to us without writing or notifying us, he was sending her. Imogene was a beautiful calf about 3 or 4 months old, when she came unexpectedly by Express. She was very scared when we uncrated her, got away from us, and started back, to where she came from. Someone headed her off and brought her back. We got a halter on her, and from then on, she became our devoted friend. Soon she was following me all about the village. If I mowed the yard grass, Imogene was back and forth, with me. If I went to the barn, so went Imogene. If a neighbor's dog attempted to attract my interest, Imogene interposed and gave the dog a rough time. Of course as she grew older she had to be denied too much freedom, but even after she became a mature cow, in the pasture, and I appeared at the pasture gate, Imogene would come galloping to me, and follow me without rope or halter, a block or more to the barn. And so, in a few words, we loved our manner of life.

However, all that happened there, with our family was not good. My trained nurse wife was taken sick with a desperate disease which took her life. I have expressed my feelings in this happening, by the poem entitled, "For She Is Gone". I could no longer be happy, where everything I saw brought our life together into my mind, so I moved into Champaign where new experiences could fill my life.

In Champaign, John opened an office in the First National Bank building for the practice of medicine. He found a living room at the Elks Quarters, and secured his meals at a local boarding house. He spent most of his daytime hours in his office. Some of his patients that he had cared for in the country contin-

ued to come to him occasionally, but on the whole his practice was very small. This gave him much time to think, and his mind seemed to return many times to his country experiences. He wondered especially how the great mass of country practitioners kept their financial records, and this returned to his mind, day after day, until he worked out a system that he thought was simple and plain. This he incorporated into a book that furnished a space for the record of one year's financial entries.

As the entries in this book were simple and easily made like the entries made on a ship's Log, very brief and to the point, John named the book which cares for one year's records The Physician's Daily Log.

His idea to publish this account book was in his mind but it was a considerable time before this was done. In the meantime he began to gain friends, to attend church, and to teach a class in the Sunday School, and to feel himself a part of the city of Champaign. During some of these activities he met Pauline Groves and fell in love with her, and persuaded her to marry him. Pauline was employed as a secretary to her father who had an established business in relation to school teachers. She retained her place when we established our new home. Being trained in business, Pauline was more active in getting things done than I. She soon began to plan getting the Physician's Daily Log published. We established The Colwell Publishing Co., and secured R. F. Colwell, my nephew, to work with us. Pauline gave up her position in her father's office, and gave her time and knowledge to the Colwell Publishing Co. After some years we were glad to install R. F. Colwell as a partner and manager of the business. The Physician's Daily Log is renewed each year and thousands of physicians in the U. S. depend upon its recording space for their financial records.

Not having any children in our home was a great cross to us, so we decided to take Velda Budd into our hearts and home. She was about thirteen years of age when she came to us, and it was very easy to love her and care for her. She is now Mrs. Clifford Routh, and has two daughters, both old enough to go to school.

I shall hope, with all my heart, that those who elect to purchase this book will enjoy its contents, both this brief record of my life and the poems. All of this has been possible only because of my wise and helpful wife, whose care for me is so great. To her I give all the glory, if there be any.

J.B.C.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

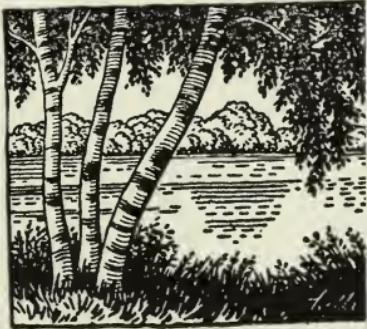
	Page No.
The Songs That Are Unsung	1
Spirit of Calmness	2
Along the Sangamon	3
Transmigration	4
Clouds	5,6
Song of My Heart	7
Pain	8
My Guiding Star	9
The Paths That Lead	10
The Michigander	11
Virility	12
Our Traffic Cop	13
Fishin' Days Are Gone	14
To A Hospital Thermometer	15
Thought Knows No "No Can Do"	16
The Birth of Love	17
Retrospect	18
The Buckeye Trail	19
To Thank You	20
The Birthday of the Christ	21
Young Lady Dancing by the Sea	22
To I-O-Way	23
Janie Duck	24
In Lovely Florida	25,26
Peter	27
June's Morning Overture	28
The Singing Pines	29-31
The Sure, Sure Sign of Spring	32
In Sunny Florida	33
Lost Visions	34

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
June Moon	35
The Call of the Great Northern Loon	36
Trees That Dream	37,38
The Grocer's Cat	39
Resurrection	40
To a Stratoliner	41,42
For She is Gone	43
I Went to Fish	44
Reflections on the Trip Abroad of a Friend	45
She Sails (A Song)	46
Cheerfulness	47
The Wavery, Quavery, Little Screech Owl	48
To a Frond	49,50
To Willie the Weeper	51
I Am Thinking of You	52
Lines	53
A Letter to Skippy	54,55
A Northwest Wind	56
Cardinal Calling to Spring	57,58
A Christmas Melody	59
A Christmas Toast	60
Dear Friend of Old	61
To a Discarded Razor Blade	62
Lines for an Autograph Album	63
To a Shut-In	63
The Voice of the Rose	64
A Little Child Shall Lead	65
Serve	65,66
Golden Wedding Phantasy	67-69

THE SONGS THAT ARE UNSUNG

The little clouds go floating by
Huge snowflakes in an azure sea,
So soft, so beautiful I sigh,
For they implore the heart of me.



The crocus, hyacinth, and rose;
The tendrils of the clinging vine;
The greening grass; each, somehow, shows
A tenderness that speaks to mine.

The birds in spring; the wildwood's call;
The odorous earth; the murmur'ring stream;
The herd that feeds; the dews that fall;
Are songs unsung within my dream.

The little babe that lies and smiles,
And stretches tiny hands to me
With innocence and faith, beguiles
A song I cannot yet make free.

Oh, how these songs, unsung, abound!
The heart leaps but the lips are sealed.
The thought comes, but no words are found
Wherewith that joy may be revealed.

Should e'er the gift be laid on me,
Should I be crowned with power to sing,
The stars, the lake, soft wind and bee,
Shall motivate the songs I'll bring.



SPIRIT OF CALMNESS

Spirit of Calmness

Enter my heart.

Build you a throne there,
Never depart.

Rule with a scepter

Of Peace in your hand;

Teach me the joy
Of your quiet command.

Let me forget

All the worries and cares;

Petty ambitions;

The "why fors", the "wheres";
Strivings for self;

For preferment; for gain;

I would renounce these

And thy peace attain.

Show me the depths

Of the life I may plumb,

Rock crystal clear,

As a life may become,

Founded on peace

And of good will intent.

Life lived for others,

In sweet service spent.

Spirit of Calmness

Enter my door!

Over my spirit

Your steadiness pour;

Reign with a scepter

Of Love in your hand;

Happiness follows,

Your gentle command.

ALONG THE SANGAMON

Along the Sangamon today,
A marvelous sight is seen.
A snowy carpet spreads each way,
And vales, that once were green,
Are dazzling white. The clouds are gray,
And Winter's blasts are keen.

Now, all the trees, each bush, the reeds
That fringe the ice-bound stream,
Wear fur-trimmed robes. The ragged weeds
Bend low, with ice and snow, and gleam!
The triad footprint of the rabbit leads
To brush-heap home, a crystal dream.

Unheard the red bird's cheery call,
But juncoes flit from twig to bough;
The katydid died with the fall,
(All insect harps are silent, now),
But sycamore, and oak, and redbud, all
Breathe forth a murmuring, I know not how.

A crow wings lazily the frosty air;
A squirrel seeks his hidden store;
Each tuft of grass is diadem most rare;
Into the lap of soul new beauties pour,
With every glance a sight more fair,
Something more lovely to adore!

Such sights, such sounds, the spirit woo.
The cares of life dissolve and fade.
Come FAITH, our comradeship renew,
Sealed by the magic of this lovely glade.
And Sangamon, a toast to you:
With conjurer's art thou dost persuade!

TRANSMIGRATION



Before the window of a shop
With fishing tackle on display, I stop
To view the rods, hooks, lines and reels;
The painted lures; the canvas creels;
And landing net
As yet unwet;
To me each shining article appeals.

But, as I gaze, these disappear.
Within the window, showing clear,
I see some pines — a rocky shore —
A little baylet I adore —
A fishing boat
E'en now afloat,
While wavelets rock it aft and fore!

Why should I care though wind be chill?
My heart within, is warm with thrill.
I see no more the slush and snow
Wherein I stand: but mem'ry's glow
Brings summer day
With me away
Beside the lake where big ones grow.

CLOUDS

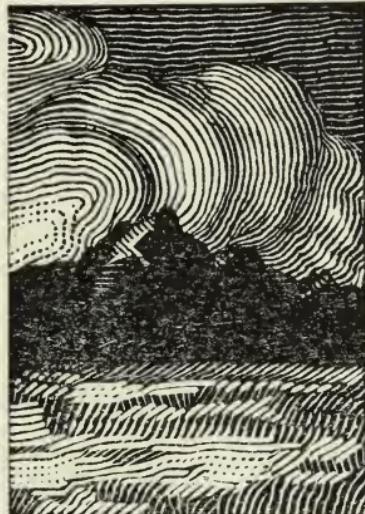
Clouds, many clouds
Hanging high in the sky,
Drifting so softly
And quietly by.
Tiny clouds, fleecy,
And downy, and white,
Blotches of snow
In summer sunlight.

Silver clouds, gray
In the afternoon sun;
Tableland, plain,
And mountain in one;
Rocks piled, and caverns,
And rivers that wind
Down to a quiet sea,
All intertwined.

Cliffs on horizon
With edges of gold;
Minarets, towers,
And mansions untold;
Horsemen and chariots
Breasting the breeze;
Ships on parade
Borne along by great seas.

Battle front, torn
By a torrent of shell;
Smoke, and the mist
Of the low lying dell;
Flame in the flash
Of the reflected sun—
Pictured in clouds
Since the world was begun.

(Continued on next page)



CLOUDS

(Continued from page 5)

Clouds at the sunset
Show garnet and rose,
Turquoise, and jade,
And an orange that glows ;
Red of the winedrop ;
The yellow of gold ;
A riot of colors
Which change and unfold.

Cloudlet you drift
And you sail to the west.
Warm is your courage
And soft is your breast.
Down to the end
Of the world where you ride,
Whence is the faith
That you take as your guide ?

Long thou hast ridden
An uncharted sea.
Strike for the harbor
And take me with thee !
On thy soft bosom
I will me to lie
Dreaming my way
To the sweet bye and bye.

SONG OF MY HEART

Father, All Beauteous, loving and kind,
Temper, I pray, every thought of my mind.
Sweeten all bitterness, banish despair,
Help me Thy witness now, always, to bear.

When I am sad let Thy joy come to me;
Dare I be bold send Thy humility;
If anger comes, or if hatreds arise,
Grant me, dear Father, the light of Thine eyes!

Should I know envy or greed or disdain,
Should my quick tongue cause another one pain,
Waft Thy forgiveness to my erring heart;
Forgiving, Father, how lovely Thou art!

Save me from self, let me Thy beauty see,
Thou who has given Thyself utterly;
Fashion my spirit more like unto Thine,
Patient, forgiving, unselfish, divine.



PAIN

Pain comes as fire to a hesitant soul,
Lost, for the moment, in forging its goal;
Smelting the ore and consuming the dross,
Pain bears a banner triumphant, a cross.

* * * *

Give me then, grace to endure to the end
All that pain offers — the gift of a friend —
Shaping, refining my spirit for aye;
Lifting my signal against a clear sky!



MY GUIDING STAR

As I pursue the Way of Life
So oft' I lose my way.
My wayward feet turn from the path,
So prone are they to stray.
The joys my downcast eyes behold
Lead me afield so far
I quite forget The Light That Guides,
The soul's sustaining star!



But soon I know I am adrift,
Am wand'ring in the way
Where purposeless are life's pursuits
When one forgets to pray.
'Tis then I lift my thought in prayer
To seek my heart's desire,
And God relights my guiding star
With His celestial fire.



THE PATHS THAT LEAD

This world has paths of many kinds,
From East to West, and all between.
One way seems straight ; another winds ;
While yet a third one leads, and finds
A course to peaceful, pastoral scene.

Such paths may cross, may intertwine ;
We walk beside the friends we love.
Our hearts rejoice in the design
That friendship weaves. For this, Divine,
Our thanks we waft to Thee, above.

But paths must part, dear ones divide,
When duty calls from distant field.
The greater good our feet must guide—
The greater good is vast, and wide,
To it we humbly yield.

Though we be led by ways afar,
New friends, new cares, new joys to share,
The distance cannot Love disbar ;
Nor Faith, resplendent as the evening star,
For God is everywhere !

THE MICHIGANDER

The gander leads his feathered flock
With stately tread, and slow;
A dignity few birds can mock
Attends him as they go.

Uplifted head on graceful neck,
An eye that glows with fire—
No rooster ever tries to check
A gander full of ire.

Likewise the “Michigander” leads,
A leader full of fire!
With lofty words, and powerful deeds,
His acts our hearts inspire.

So — here’s to them from Michigan,
We say with utmost candor,
We like their style — here’s to their clan
All hail the “Michigander”!



VIRILITY

Fierce winds must search, must sweep a tree,
To bring it strength — virility.
Its branches twist, and lash, and toss,
Oft times with seeming fearful loss ;
When tender twigs, torn from the tree,
Or giant limbs, as chance may be,
Shriek in the storm, and fall to die
The bleeding parent tree, hard by.

But when the heart is clean, and sound,
When trunk stands straight from limbs to ground
And roots drive deep into the soil
They reach a power to make recoil.
Such tree regains its life, and pace
Its injuries leave but little trace
In fact, its battle with the wind was fair,
And nature makes its own repair.

OUR TRAFFIC COP



We have a street dog in our town
That chases autos up and down,
And tries, by every dog known ruse,
To make them mind their Ps and Qs.
Most often, by the West Side Park,
I hear his animated bark —
This self appointed, canine cop,
Who works the dog-town "Go" and "Stop".
All careless drivers passing by
Get **one mean look**, from his sharp eye,
Bare teeth, a growl, or a bitten tire —
For this wise dog is full of ire!!

* * *

Ah me, for just one happy day,
I'd love to be this dog, this stray!
I'd tell some drivers what I think,
As they steal my rights, with a laugh and wink.
I'd growl, and bark, bare teeth, and fight,
And chase the speeders with all my might!

"Tis well for the peace
Of that "Hell bent" crew
That a stray dog cop
I "no can do".

FISHIN' DAYS ARE GONE

The leaves have fallen, and the limbs are bare,
The cricket's chirp is stilled along the shore;
Above, the lustrous crow sails in the chilly air;
Below, the frisky squirrel hunts his winter store.

Before me lies the creek I know so well—
Each hole, its every pile of drift, its snags—
Just here I caught that two pound "cat"!

(I love to dwell

Upon the mem'ries of the days I made GOOD bags).

But, now the leaves are gone and limbs are bare,
And icy needles skirt the water's edge.
Oh, speed the time of dogwood bloom, of odors rare,
When green comes once again to osage hedge!



TO A
HOSPITAL
THERMOMETER



Little, shining, piece of glass,
Here you come plumb full of "sass"!
Chuck'ling, chort'ling, grinning, smug,
Where'd you get your license, lug?

Safe beneath the nurse's thumb
Who can speak his thoughts — by gum!
When she slides you 'neath your tongue?
"Settle down old boy, you're stung!"

Don't you ever get enough
Of that sleuth, detective stuff?
What you huntin' in my mouth?
Think I'm balmy? Goin' South?

I may fail to grade "elect"
But I keep my self-respect,
While you steep in alcohol
Winter, summer, springtime, fall!



THOUGHT KNOWS NO "NO CAN DO"

We think of you so many times
Throughout the passing year,
And long to see your smiling face,
And to your voice give ear;
We wish to clasp your friendly hand,
To look into your eyes;
But, lack-a-day, we "no can do",
As you no doubt surmise.

Were we but wave of radio,
At once both here and there;
Could, at one time, both come and go
Across the silent air;
We'd call across the ether space
At eight, this very night;
Then home again at ten we'd chase,
(Perhaps to your delight).

But thought must be our ether wave;
In thought we ride your way;
In thought we picture your surprise,
And hear your loud "Hooray"!
In thought we sit and bide a wee
With friendship flowing true—
To time or place thought is no slave,
Thought knows no "no can do".



THE BIRTH OF LOVE

Love left His home with Father God
To come to lowly Earth,
The blazing stars attendant
Upon His human birth.
While heavenly choirs sang paeans
To praise a Prince of Peace,
That first glad morn' of Christmas—
Earth's promise of release.

Love came, the gentle Christ Child,
To grow into a man
Who loved the whole round, human world,
For such was in God's plan.
Now, centuries have run their sands
Across the face of Time
With those who care, beholding
Love's fruiting Christmas clime.

So, light the candles! Ring the bells!
And raise resplendent tree!
Forgetting not the birth of Love
Who came for you and me.
For, Holy Babe of Bethlehem,
Your star shines in our hearts!
And ne'er shall we, while life endures,
Deny the peace your love imparts.

RETROSPECT

Gone are the bees,
That roam the field,
When summer's blooms are sweet;
Bare are the trees,
Whose cool shades yield
Relief, from mid-day heat.
Hushed are the birds
We love to hear,
The robin, and the lark;
Nor can these words
Describe how dear
Their song, as falls the dark!
Gray is the sky,
And overcast;
The purling brook is still;
The brown leaves lie,
(Their time is past,)
The wind is bleak and chill.

Gone are the joys
Of summer days,
Portrayed in fire-place ember;
Now, come the toys,
And Christmas lays,
'Tis late in cold December!



THE BUCKEYE TRAIL

Give ear, good people, to my tale,
Forget your present strait—
We'll take a winding gravel trail
Back to the Buckeye State.
And there, atop the highest hill
We'll view the scene outspread—
The valley fair, the stream, the mill,
The school house painted red.
A wood that mounts the hillside rise—
With trees now gaunt and bare,
Yet, beautiful to knowing eyes,
To homesick eyes, how fair!
Beyond the wood, in pasture brown,
The gentle sheep repose
Upon the ground that slopes adown—
They close their eyes and doze.
A squirrel barks as we sit mute,
A partridge drums — not far,
A flicker tunes his noisy flute,
But, soon will come the evening star.
For, shadows lengthen on the lea,
The day dies as it must,
The sun dips to the western sea,
A sea of golden dust!



* * *

This is the end of Buckeye Trail.
The homing heart has seen
The scene kept green in childhood's vale
With all those mem'ries keen.
And thus, within each hidden heart
Its Buckeye Trail is found,
That leads the homesick soul apart
And back to childhood ground.



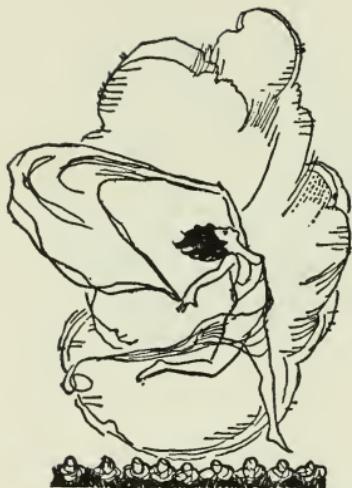
TO THANK YOU:

What wells within my breast
I fain would say,
Is far more tender
Than "A pleasant day!"
Though charming is such formal greeting,
Its import is too small, too fleeting
For, wrapped within your gift
I find
A sweet incense
That stirs one's mind.
It calls upon me to express
The gratitude I feel;
The thanks that press.
So to, "THE YOU,"
My kindly friend,
A warm acknowledgment
I send.
God rest, and keep ye
To the end!



THE BIRTHDAY OF THE CHRIST

Some twenty centuries have spread their girth
Since that first Christmas Day.
The day the Christ Child, sent to earth,
In humble manger lay.
In innocence and love He came,
In love He lived, He taught, He served,
Compassionate, and heart aflame,
Our sorrows He observed.
And when He went, He left behind
His loving spirit, as a balm.
To heal the hurts of all mankind ;
To lead from storm to calm.
And so, His goodness pervades all,
As lovely now, as in those days of yore.
We feel the sweetness of His spirit, call,
And bring our gift, the Master, to adore.



YOUNG LADY
DANCING BY THE SEA

This lovely maid, with joyous eyes,
Is truly happy, I surmise;
And as she dances, by the sea
Is sending out her joy to thee!

She has no time for scowl, or frown;
She cast them in the sea to drown.
At that, this maid is very wise.
She knows that life's a precious prize.

If one is glad, and still more glad,
There is no time for being sad.
There is no time to fuss, and whine;
No time to argue, or repine.

So, like a happy, joyous maid
May children meet life unafraid.
With kindness in blue eyes that shine,
And happiness that is divine.

TO I-O-WAY

I

In I-o-way, in I-o-way,
There's something doing every day:
Out where the tall corn, taller grows,
And multiplies in rows and rows;
Across whose plains the cyclone blows;
Out where the Des Moines River flows,
There's something doing every day

In I-o-way,
In I-o-way !!



II

In I-o-way, in I-o-way,
That's where the West begins, they say—
That's where they raise the pig so big, yes, bigger.
Also they raise the corn-fed "chigger".
'Tis there that fertile fields of grain
Across the state, in endless chain,
Unfold themselves — and hearts are gay,

In I-o-way,
In I-o-way !!

III

In I-o-way, in I-o-way,
The native can both work and play.
He loves his task; he loves his fun;
He loves to plow; he loves his gun;
Oh, when my race is nearly run,
My threads of life are mostly spun,
May I, then, spend the final day,

In I-o-way,
In I-O-WAY !!



JANIE DUCK

It was no less than super luck
When Santa brought us Janie Duck,
As like to Donald as two peas
A twin you'd say, from crest to knees.
Of course our Janie has no blue;
Is white below, and through and through.
She sports no legs, no awkward feet;
Sits on her breast, white as a sheet.
And she can twirl her head, and bill,
So fast it makes a statue thrill.
And from her head the waters gush,
To make our lawn grass green and lush.
Now isn't that a thing to praise?
How fine it is on rainless days
To set the duck out, in the yard,
Give her the hose as her dear pard,
And watch the grass turn green and grow,
Until the yard-man comes to mow.
If Janie were a hen she'd cluck,
Thank goodness she's a simple duck.
She helps a family with their work
But not like Donald, with his quirk,
For finding trouble everywhere,
And mussing everybody's hair.
No sir, our Janie's some sweet duck!
Gee, Santa, Janie's super luck.

Words for a Song IN LOVELY FLORIDA

Chorus

Awa-a-a-a-a-a-a-y
Down south
In Florida
Beneath a "cracker" moon,
We lose our hearts
To happiness,
And lilt a fairy tune!

For-r-r-r

There,

Is where,
The very air

Is balmy, soft, and sweet;
And shining sands are grateful
To the tread of unshod feet!

I Oh, lovely land of sunshine,
With healing rays of light
Which cleanse the hurts of battle
With tender, caring might!
God's gift of humane mercy;
Spread free for every man;
The powerful ray actinic
Brings health, and joy, and tan.

II The charm of bloom hibiscus;
The beauty of live oaks;
And veils of Spanish moss a-sway
Our sighing love invokes.
The graceful palms, majestic;
Vines, here, burst into flame.
Oh, Florida, the hosts that seek
Give glory to thy name.

(Continued on next page)



IN LOVELY FLORIDA

(Continued from page 25)

III Adown the mystic isles — the keys,
Where pearly waters cross,
A rolling surf on buttress beach
May foamy wavelets toss!
Blue, blue the sky — and arching,
A curve to heaven's dome:—
Reach out, and pluck a rosy star,
Your candlelight for home.

IV Shake off your cares, and fearing;
Let love, and truth, and joy,
Control your very heart this day,
And future days employ.
Give, give, as gives the healing sun
To make of Earth a place
Wherein the life of every one
Is sweetened by God's grace.

Chorus

Awa-a-a-a-a-a-a-y
Down south
In Florida
Beneath a "cracker" moon,
We lose our hearts
To happiness,
And lilt a fairy tune!
For-r-r-r-
There,
Is where,
The very air
Is balmy, soft, and sweet;
And shining sands are grateful
To the tread of unshod feet!

PETER

Again, I hear at my back door,
The tuneful voice of Peter.
It lifts the weariness of me,
For Peter's song is sweeter
Than haunting note of lute can be.
(My robin friend is Peter).

The maple bough is his retreat,
He loves thereon to teeter,
And swell his throat with minor note,
In broken, ribald meter;
Then, soft, remote, let cadence float—
This voice of spring, this Peter!

I hear thee, Peter, in the early day,
And yet again, as evening nears.
So kind and tender are thy songs
My eyes are dim with waiting tears;
Soft grows my heart, and fancied wrongs
Fade and are gone,—forgotten fears.

So, Peter, stay at my back door!
Sing, “Pee-e-ter, Pee-e-ter, Pee-e-ter”!
The liquid note in your red throat
Beguiles my cares, and life is sweeter.
Sing, on your maple bough, and teeter,
Dear redbreast, “Pee-e-ter, Pee-e-ter, Pee-e-ter”!



JUNE'S MORNING OVERTURE

I 'rouse me as the first faint flush of dawn
Begins to edge the lacy clouds of eastern sky.
(So softly was the balmy night withdrawn
I did not hear nor feel its wings go by).



With fairy touch, the gentle waking ray
Invades each leafy tree where songsters sweet repose,
To woo them once again for this new day
And loose the symphony their throats enclose.

Within my chamber, where I lie in drowsy ease,
With casement wide, enframing fading stars,
I feel the soft caresses of a luring breeze
Newborn to bear my soul beyond its bars.

And now there comes the softly swelling tide
Of harmony, that charms the listening ear ;
At first, in fitful cadences from far and wide,
Betimes 'most faint, then loud and clear.

'Til gathering power, as onward sweeps a wave,
Its mighty volume floods the soul with sheer delight,
Receding gently, while its wavelets lave
The softened senses in the early morning light.

Now dies the overture to fainter, whispering tone,
Its sweetness still the air as perfume filling.
Now rushes on the King of Day to mount his throne,
While, softer, fainter, farther yet the trilling !!

Full blown the day now spreads its beauties to the view,
A sequence to the dawn, which hastens the rout of night.
Thus doth the charms of earth pass in review
That those who look and listen may enjoy them in their flight.

THE SINGING PINES

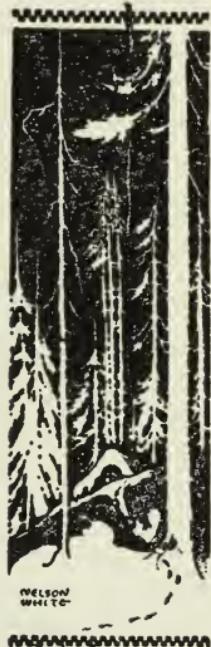
Majestic are
The towering pines
That lift their boles,
Direct and high,
Up, up against
Blue vaulted sky.

With face upturned
To meet the kiss
Of dewy dawn's
First golden ray,
Serene and calm
They greet the nascent day.

So straight, so tall,
So strong, so clean.
Their quiet dignity
Endows the woodland scene.

Like giant arrows
Shot into the earth
By warring gods,
In times of myth;
Their shafts erect
And tufted still;
Their tips imbedded
In a hill—they stand
To glorify the land,
This earth, through
Their mysterious rebirth.

Their majesty appeals.
Their lovely, swaying forms
Outride triumphantly
The winter's wildest storms.



NELSON WHITE

THE SINGING PINES

(Continued from page 29)

Unchanged throughout
The ever changing year
Within which most of earth,
The fields and woods,
Are part time brown and sere,
The pines retain their modest green
Save when o'erlaid
With silver sheen.
And then—ah then,
This bloom of mist
With which the needles
Have been kissed
Is glory, spread
Before the eyes,
God's gift of wonder and surprise!

A million needled branchlets bear
A million waving, drooping plumes,
The handiwork of Nature's silent looms.
Amazingly the warp by woof is caught
To fashion here a fowler's net
Which snares the ripples in the air
And amplifies their movements where
The motion is but lightly set.
Superb the artistry
With which the work is fraught!

Held by the candelabra of the limbs
Green tapers ride and nod and bow
As summer winds bestir.
Unlit, their wondrous beauty trims
The outdoor altar, and their living green
Declares the nearness of the Great Unseen.

Cathedral, this, no less—no more—
With wide, inviting, open door
On North, on East, on South, on West,
Where any soul, howe'er distressed,
May enter and commune within
To woo the peace it needs to win.

(Continued on next page)

THE SINGING PINES

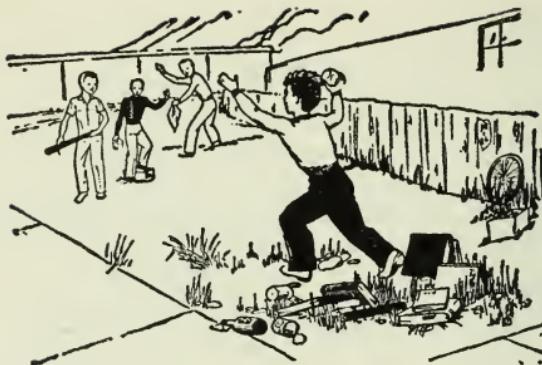
(Continued from page 30)

And oh, the music of these sighing pines!
So sweet, so soft, so clear, so low,
The tones are carried to and fro
To form a melody of sound designs
Which floods the spirit with a quiet peace,
Bringing the weary soul a sure release—
A gentle furnace fire that purifies, refines.

Each pine becomes a singing tower
With carillon in belfry bower.
So lightly are the bells here hung
The softest breeze makes them give tongue.
Yet, from the bells come whisper tones
And murmurings that bring delight
As they make music through the stilly night.

Mayhap, a blustering breeze comes charging by
Which rocks the bells and makes them sigh,
Until the cherubs cease their play
Along the starlit milky way
To gather in these tiny sighs
Invading their play paradise,
And change them into whisper songs,
Sweet antidotes for human wrongs,
Which they rescatter o'er the earth
'Midst plenteous sounds of cherub mirth.

The pines, the pines,
The lovely pines!
They grace the highway,
Where it winds—
Their spires are pointed
Toward the sky,
"Look up," they call
As we rush by.
Their feet are firm
Beneath the sod
And firm their faith
In life and God.



THE SURE, SURE SIGN OF SPRING

Sometimes adown an alley,
Sometimes on vacant lot,
Oftimes upon the sidewalk,
On any smooth, dry spot,
The "Kids" are congregating
In groups, about a ring.

'Tis MARBLE TIME in boyland,
The sure, sure sign of spring !

The lure of "taw" and "bowler",
Of "mibs" and "tiger's eye",
(My own boyhood comes back to me)
"Knucks down, and plump, you guy !
Oh gee, he missed it—missed it!"
They laugh, and whoop, and sing.
'Tis MARBLE TIME in boyland,
The sure, sure sign of spring !

Shucks—I don't watch for robins,
Or ground hog's broken nap,
To see if Old Man Winter
Is on his final lap,
Nor do I need discover
Wild geese on northern wing,
'Tis MARBLE TIME in boyland,
The sure, sure sign of spring !

IN SUNNY FLORIDA

Far down in sunny Florida
One finds delightful charm;
The palm trees wave their graceful fronds
In zephyrs soft and warm.
Hibiscus hedge and flowering vine,
And citrus blossoms sweet
Display their lavish beauty here
On many a quiet street.
The beaches, with their pounding surf,
Long avenues of sand,
Call to the souls of human ants
"Enjoy this fairy land,"
The sapphire sea, the mystic keys,
Invite one to explore,
To sail, to fish, to fly, to wish
One lived forever on this shore.
But there must be another side,
Some features strange and weird—
Each liveoak tree that spoke to me
Spoke thru' a mist grey beard.
In swarms the vultures hang in air,
Gar fish possess the streams,
While 'gators rule the everglades
And often rule one's dreams.
But, land of coconuts and sun,
Which snow and frost decline,
Your coral strands and orange juice
Beguile this heart o'mine.
Your mocking birds delight the ear,
Becalm my restless life—
I worship at your Singing Tower
In sweet surcease from strife.



LOST VISIONS

Could I but snare the sweet, fleeting fancies;
Hold them engraven for aye on my heart;
Could I but clasp those light, fairy fingers,
Touching, inspiring, but soon to depart;
Could I but treasure, unfaded, forever,
The swift passing visions of beauty so rare;
Anchor the sheen of the ecstatic dreamlets;
How they would lighten the burden I bear!

Now, as I struggle against the grim darkness,
Whelmed and o'er saddened, an eternal night
Stretches in vast and infinite silence.
Gone are the fancies! Lost is their light.
Now, that I need their sweet comfort, their solace
Now, their dear forms would I haply recall,
But vanished—all vanished—Gives there no answer?
Naught is for me but the wormwood and gall.



JUNE MOON

Ol' Moon, lookin' down,
Do you evah wink yo' eye?
Do you smile while goin' roun'
At the things you spy?

Doan you know yo' silvah glow
Sets mos' hahts to poundin'?
I'm a tellin' 'cause I know—
Tellin' and expoundin'!

Moon, yo' beams is shuah some beams!
Moon, yo' light is paralyzin'!
When you shine the whole worl' seems
Beautiful and most surprisin'!

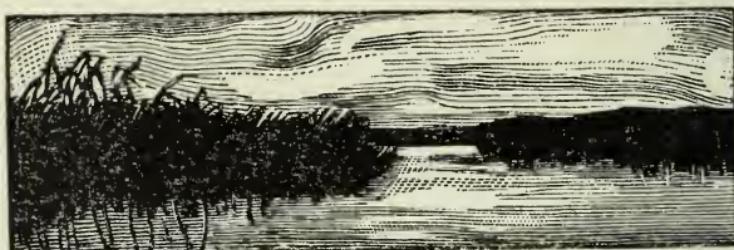
Rode, las' night, and saw you sailin'
Through the clouds amongst the stahs;
Rode, and saw yo' light a trailin'
O'er the fiel's an pastuah bahs.

Moon, you set mah haht a fluttah;
(Lady fair rode by mah side)
Ah, the words ah couldn' uttah,
Dammed within me like a tide!

Ah am shuah yo' eye was winkin'
At mah suffocatin' plight.
Couldn' say the thoughts foh thinkin',
Leastwise couldn' say 'em right.

So, ol' moon, so roun' an' smilin',
You can shuahly cast some spell.
Will ah ride, the sweet hours whilin'
Once again with Chloe? Well!!





THE CALL OF THE GREAT NORTHERN LOON

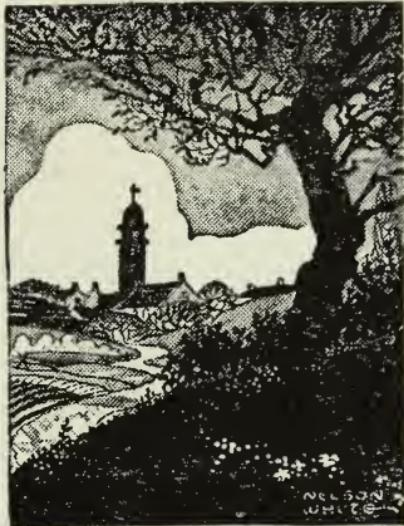
Have you passed a night on the shore of a lake
In that northern country, afar?
Where fish abound, and the jack pines lift
Their sage-green plumes to the evening star?
Where the lap, lap, lap, of the restless wave,
And the dank, moss-scented air,
With incense sweet from the balsam boughs,
Ascend with your evening prayer?

'Tis there you may learn the song of the loon,
The strange Great Northern Loon;
And some may hear, and call it queer,
This twisting, haunting, eerie tune.
It sounds somewhat like a rusty hinge,
Or the creak of an unoiled cart,
An old fashioned, time worn, wooden pump;
But it strikes a chord in my primal heart.

All day these queer birds swim, and dive,
And feed, and sport in the lake.
With a wary eye for a foe near by,
They know which path 'neath the waves to take.
Behold they fade, are gone for a while!
There is naught but the rippling wave—
Then, off to the right some half a mile,
A black head wearing a large bird-smile
Escapes from a watery grave.

As the sun sinks low in the gilded west,
And the moon comes forth to ride,
The bed time call of the loon sounds best;
Its cog-wheel, eerie strains abide.
When high in the air he wings his way
Over camp, and cabin, shore, and bay,
His plaintive, pleading, good night call
Is a priest's benediction voiced for all.

TREES THAT DREAM



December trees, bereft of leaves,
Stand stark before each chilling breeze.
Their myriad fingers, high in air,
Now stiffened by the frosts, are bare.
Long slender arms stretch toward the sky,
Tuned to the North Wind southing by.

'Tis but a few short weeks ago
These trees were cloaked in golden glow;
In copper, red, and silver-brown;
A yellow, green, and purple gown.
But now, resigned to what must be,
Their charms exposed, as all may see,
Upright they sleep, feet deep in earth,
Whence April calls for their rebirth.

Their sap runs cold, soon will congeal.
Ice, sleet, and snow they cannot feel.
Let Winter freeze, send roaring blast,
And over us its kingdom cast;
The trees reck' not of Winter's power
For this is their long, drowsing hour.

(Concluded on next page)

TREES THAT DREAM

(Continued from page 37)

Direct thine eyes on dreaming tree;
Enjoy its lovely symmetry;
Its grace of curve and luring line,
Unique in spacing and design.
How delicate the tracery wrought
By interlocking branchlets caught
Above by twigs and gossamer,
Held close by wrinkled bark and tiny spur!

Likewise behold the pattern spread
In woven moonlight's silver thread
And laid before us on the ground;
A lace of interspace, profound!

Nor does the tree, asleep in peace,
Its charming fairy music cease.
The voices of the leaves are gone
But slender, tender branchlets carry on.
Hung here and there, throughout each tree
Wind harps invoke their harmony;
And be the breeze but soft, or strong,
The little gnomes break into song
Because the harps play. All unheard
To human ears, unless the soul is stirred.

* * *

These glories of a dreaming tree
God hath prepared for you and me.



PHOTO BY PAULINE COLWELL

THE PATH TO PANAMA

Along the shimmering Caribbean waves
Was spread one shining path to glory,
Hung high from heaven adown to sea,
A setting sun and cloud depicted story!

Our sturdy bark sailed "Sou by West,"
Athwart the lacy clouds and sunset sheen
That one might glimpse the weaving hand of God
And sense His loving fatherhood, I ween.

THE GROCER'S CAT

Behold the village grocer's cat!

That's who I am;

(Named Sam)

Not sleek—not fat—

But foe, and woe, to sneaking rat.

I wander out and in

'Twixt box and bin

With feline grin,

And many a tender mouse I eat

Because of silent feet,

Well armed and fleet.

Sometimes I park myself

On crowded shelf;

Or in the window built for show—

For that's a place I love to go

To doze, and purr in the sun's warm glow

And watch the circling flies below.

At night, when men and dogs are still

I roam as dictates my sweet will.

On many a cat date I intrude

Without intending to be rude,

When lo, an old feud is renewed!

'Tis thus I gather many a thrill.

My ears are slit; and cocked one eye;

And I well know the reason why.

But what of that?

I'm just the grocer's cat,

Named Sam,

That's who I am!!





RESURRECTION

Last fall when chill winds swept the fields,
And swirled the dead leaves in the wood,
It filled our flue with eerie squeals—
I knew spring fishin' time was good,
So I just took my fishin' poles
And stowed 'em on the proper nails,
To wait 'til spring should stir our souls
And make us yearn for well loved trails.

Today, those fish poles spoke to me,
From where they hung on garage wall;
And strong desire awoke in me—
Desire that had been dead since fall.
The flicker yammers from his tree,
A soft breeze keeps the willows swishin'—
My office would a prison be:
I'm digging worms to go a fishin'!



TO A STRATOLINER

Oh, silhouette against the sky,
You float the blue, so wide, so high,
Where purple martin dips its dusky wings
Into the music of the spheres;
To gyrate, later, back to where
Its love has hung for years.

With sound of motors lost in space
You cast your shadow
On the sunstruck cloud — a place
So near the heaven's sweet abode
The heart can only long
To be sojourning on that road.

You roam the blue! You mount the crag!
You sail between the pinnacles of thunder head.
Nor dost thou heed the precipice before
While pulses rhythmically thine engine heart
(A man made thing, a wondrous work of art)
Indeed, thou art an open door
Through which to view another world outspread
And ponder how its sky reflects your silver flag.

(Continued on next page)

TO A STRATOLINER
(Continued from page 41)

Here, from my earthbound garden chair,
I probe the sky
And with my mortal eyes
Drink in the beauty of the path you fly!
So caught with strong desire
I yearn to lift my very soul
To yonder way you trace
Unfettered in Immensity of space.

Canst thou, thence, liner look adown
Upon the toil worn, sweating earth
To sense the heaving ferment of a plan
Evolved of God for His child man?
In which man's will resolves itself in God's
And thus attains new stature in rebirth?

Oh vision for the future peace
When bitterness and hate, and greed shall die
And brotherhood shall reach the utmost bounds
Of heaven and earth and sky!
Fly, liner, fly! Uplift your wings and fly!
Bear in your breast, good will to man
A guerdon of that happy day
When sinful strife shall cease.



FOR SHE IS GONE

The m^rning light reflects a cheerless sky :
A fitful wind tears at the clinging vine :
Gone is the dream that kept her nigh
And numbness fills this heart of mine,
For she is gone.

Across the floor no more her steps resound ;
No more she comes to meet me at the door ;
Her empty chair appeals, and tears confound
The image that I had in days of yore,
For she is gone.

Night comes and softening shadows fold
The world and its fair scenes in kind embrace.
But only comes to me in shadows told
The sad, sad vision of her empty place,
For she is gone.

Ah, desolate the day, the night, my heart !
My longings, never stilled, are all in vain.
Is there no way to know, to rend apart
The veil, or mitigate the inward pain,
Now she is gone ?

God, in Thy goodness, now appear to me ;
With tender touch disperse the blindness of my eyes ;
With love set my oppressed' spirit free,
And teach me that Thy plans are ever wise,
Tho' she is gone.



I WENT TO FISH

I went to fish, at a place I know,
Where the stream winds languidly to and fro;
There a red-bud stood adorned in pink,
And greening willows fringed the brink.

The soothing 'plaint of the mourning dove
Coalesced with jubilant notes from above
That came from a thrasher's active throat.
(Such a ribald air has the thrasher's note!)

In the quiet pools I cast my lure
And breathed in the perfumed air so pure,
That softly fanned my careworn brow.
The PAST slipped by and I lived in the NOW.

Thus, ever, the NOW has a joy to give
As spice for the hum-drum life we live
If we but heed the proffered gift
Our cares dissolve and are set adrift.

* * * *

Did I catch the fish I went to get?
Not a one did I snare. All are swimming yet.
But the Unknown spoke His soothing words
To my open heart, through the mouths of birds.

REFLECTIONS ON THE TRIP ABROAD OF A FRIEND

Your journey lies before, while here behind
Are those who travel on with thee, in thought;
And as the fascinating views unwind
Before your eager gaze may naught
Bedim the luster of the visions sought,
Or cloud the beauty of the world you hope to find.



The rolling ship, the stiff'ning westward breeze,
The cloud flecked sky, the lovely moonlit night,
The crested waves, that seem to mount and seize
With tender arms, your bark to guide aright,
The drifting smoke, and every complex sight
Be thine, and gentle thoughts of those behind, with these.

Strange lands, strange faces, new impressions gained;
The hurly-burly throng at point of debarkation;
A foreign phrase of imprecation unexplained;
The child that from its mother claims its frequent ration;
Such pictures pass with endless variation.
'Tis thus the name of changing world is well sustained.

These photographs of life, of men, of cities and of water ways;
Of ruins, mountain peaks, the sea, and works of art,
Must all be reaped, the grain, the harvest of your days
Be garnered in the storehouse of your mind. Your part
Will be to separate the chaff, and keep within your heart
The beautiful, the noble, and the true, you find within this maze.

Then will the soul expand and joy reward the quest,
And quickened understanding have its charming sway,
Oh, may a splendid satisfaction be your constant guest,
And peace and comfort mark attendance all the way,
Until the god of fortune brings again the happy day
Wherein we meet and tender recollections are expressed!



SHE SAILS (A Song)

She sails!

Let the billows be kind,
Let the zephyrs refined
Gentle fingers unwind
In her hair.

She sails!

Let the soft light of day
Lift her eyes on the way,
May her spirit be gay,
As she sails.

She sails!

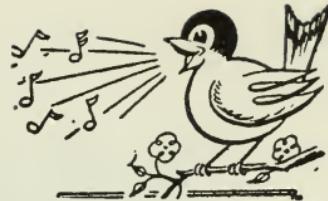
Homeward bound I attest,
Home and loved ones are best,
She has finished her quest
So she sails.

CHEERFULNESS

Poised, far above the city's street,
On swaying wire, the robin sits
Full throated. His happy notes repeat
His urgent joy. His message sweet
The hastening throngs he sends to greet;

While—

Swaying,
Swaying,
Swaying!



Nor tree, nor bush, — no leaf of green —
Can songster here behold;
Naught of the field or native scene,
Yet pours his heart in notes serene
With dainty little interludes between;

While—

Swinging,
Swinging,
Swinging!

Like petrel on the crest of wave,
He rides the undulations.
As lookouts in a tower behave,
He scans the view. His presence brave
And cheerful song, tired spirits lave;

While—

Soothing,
Soothing,
Soothing!

Thine is the cheer that ever cheers,
Oh robin, on the swaying wire!
Let every weary soul that hears
Search for thy joy, dry bitter tears.
Sing! Sing away our hidden fears

While—

Swinging,
Swaying,
Soothing.

THE WAVERY, QUAVERY, LITTLE SCREECH OWL

When Winter surrenders and loses his stings,
And contrary March gives o'er storming, and clings
To the days that caress one, (Oh, wonderful days,
Anticipatory of Spring's luring ways!)
'Tis then we may hear, at the twilight's soft fall,
The little screech owl, with his plaintive call;
This strange little singer, this wise little fowl,
The wavery, quavery, little screech owl.

When long shadows deepen and day is well done,
The time for this night bird has but well begun.
On the softest of wings, like a faint breath of air,
But with heart strings atune for his lady-love fair,
He leaves his retreat in the evergreen tree
For a rendezvous near where his sweetheart will be;
For this is the way of this soft, fluffy fowl,
The wavery, quavery, little screech owl.

There, tuning his lute to a soft minor key,
He will serenade her more than beautifully
With that wavery, quavery, long drawn out trill,
'Til the heart of his listening lady will thrill!
Again and again, in that tremulo note,
Like a chip on a wind rippled water afloat,
He will sing to his sweetheart, this nocturnal fowl,
The wavery, quavery, little screech owl.

Now, many a maiden, and many a lad,
Think the song of the owl is too lonely, too sad,
But I love its soft quaver, its coaxing, its charm,
Its plaintive beseeching should cause no alarm.
So, perch near my casement, and stare with wide eyes
Direct at my hearthstone, my earth's paradise;
And sing out your story, you queer little fowl.
Oh, wavery, quavery, little screech owl!

TO A FROND

Beautiful frond
On a coconut tree
Long I've envisioned
Communion with thee;
Waiting to watch
Thy green banner unfurl,
A living lattice,
Emerge from a curl.



Thou art complete
And thine exquisite grace
Is now reproduced
In the shadows you trace.
Beauty of outline,
Of movement, of tint,
Yellow and green
In the sunlight you glint !

Thou bursteth forth
From the breast of a tree
Bearing the secrets
Inbred with thee.
Why dost thou reach
Toward the sun and the sky ?
Wherefore thy wings ?
Dost thou hope, hence, to fly ?

(Continued on next page)

TO A FROND
(Continued from page 49)

Life hath its mysteries
Hidden in thee,
Beautiful frond
On a tropical tree.
Thou dost but answer
Thy creator's will,
Joyful submission,
His plan to fulfill.

Unhappy man,
Why not learn from a frond?
Give over trying
To guide the "beyond"?
Live thy life richly,
For thee there's a plan!
Find it, and happiness,
Befuddled man.



TO WILLIE, THE WEEPER,



THE ONE-MAN BAND

Say, Willie, The Weeper, The One-Man Band,
When you play a tune do you sit or stand?
You **must** sit, I suppose, if you play with your toes,
As well as with fingers, with mouth, and with nose;
But, how can you do that and lead a parade?
How can a non-marching band make the grade?

Oh, how can you tickle the saxophone,
And at the same time make the bassoon moan?
Play the piccolo shrill, with flourish and trill,
Make the cymbals clash, or pause and be still —
The trumpet, the tuba, the snare and bass drum?
Oh, Willie, The Weeper, you must "go some"!

Perhaps, if I saw with my wondering eyes
The way you conduct your complete enterprise,
And heard, with my ears, the plaudits and cheers,
And beheld the soft splash of your copious tears,
My wondering mind might at last understand,
Oh, Willie, The Weeper, The One-Man Band!!!





I AM THINKING OF YOU

How easy to say "I am thinking of you",

 But what does it conjure, I pray?

Does it call up your face, or your eyes shining true;
Your figure, your walk, or the dear things you do;
Your hair, or your smile, or your garment of blue?

 Oh, what is the answer, I say?

"I am thinking of you", is easily said.

 But the import of this I would seek.

Perhaps 'tis the stories together we read;
Or is it the music your voice made, instead?
Or mem'ry of roses so fragrant and red

 That match but the bloom of your cheek.

"I am thinking of you", again I repeat,

 Even thinking of you as I write;

Now what is the "you" that my spirit would greet?
Oh, what is this "you" that my thoughts rush to meet?
For thinking of you is a joy as complete

 As the star lighted heavens at night.

"I am thinking of you", but the you that I know

 I can never, no never explain:

'Tis your laugh, and your touch, and the kindness you show,
'Tis the sympathy shed, 'tis your eyes with their glow
Of deep understanding, come weal or come woe.
All that tenderness, harmony, friendship bestow
 Make the "you" of my song and refrain!

LINES

Two lines,
Three lines —
Eight or ten, or six;
Oh what fun a drawing is
When you know your trix!



Some are straight,
Others bent,
Curves and angles
Show intent.
Circles round
May abound
Blocking in back-ground.

Lines can make
A house and lot,
Or a mansion
On a plot;
Form a store or an hotel
Where a multitude may dwell.
That's a thought — is it, or not?

Also lines can make a verse,
Good, or bad, and oft times worse.
But a verse you cannot draw,
That would break poetic law.
So, I reckon, an architect
Has far more he can expect
From his lines that make design
Than can I from lines I sign.



A LETTER TO SKIPPY

My greetings, Skippy, little pal,
I can't forget you and I never shall:
E'en though a thousand miles away
You walk beside me day by day.
When I conveyed your bed, your rubber bone,
Your harness, and the things you own,
And left them in a strange abode,
And you, with kindly ones, I strode
From your enquiring gaze with mist
Before my own sad eyes. And now persist
The twists it gave my heart and mind
When I departed and left you behind.
Of course a kindly personage like you,
A friendly soul, steadfast and true,
Can soon accommodate to friendships new,
And this, I doubt not, you will promptly do.
But ne'er the less I miss your love,
Your brown eyes milder than a gentle dove
That searched my face to know my will,
Glowing with keenness to fulfill,
Trying to anticipate my least desire
And eager as the flames in newly lighted fire.
When comes the evening hour of four, and more,
And shadows lengthen 'round the door,
How I recall your great delight

(Continued on next page)

A LETTER TO SKIPPY

(Continued from page 54)

When I would lay aside my task—invite
You out to take an evening walk.
Who says a dog can never talk?
No one can better tell their joy
Than you express it, Skippy Boy.
When you go for a jog around the block
Not only do you tick, you also tock.
Head up and feet in lovely rhythm,
And ears aflop—no creed or schism
Embodiment of freedom and of joy,
With panting tongue you race! Oh, boy,
You surely show them how to run,
(Whoever "them" may be)—what fun!
And to my weary spirit, tried
By self created fears, allied
With powers of doubt and powers of care,
You bring a peace from otherwhere
Perhaps from dogdom, who can say?
A balm to heal and clear my fears away.
Yes I can feel your loving paws
Pleading your unspoken cause.
Their gentle pressure thro' the miles
Provokes my gratitude, my smiles
Refreshes and restores my soul
And courage flows again to make me whole.

* * *

God—I wouldst very humble be—
Not only canst Thou make a tree
Thou also canst create a dog
To lead a man forth from the fog
Which makes of him an inert clod.
Our gracious thanks to Thee, dear God!

A NORTHWEST WIND

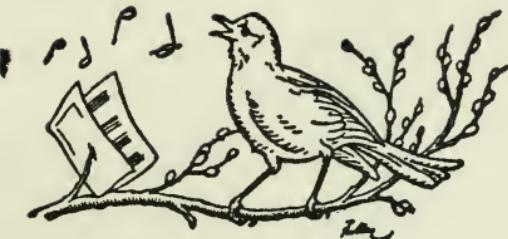
Great Giver, merciful and always kind,
Vouchsafe me once, an open mind
Attuned to understand a northwest wind!
Such wind as comes
With rush of frost and snow,
With every action braggadocio;
That whips and tears
With crash and roar,
Its tongue aslither
At my cabin door.
I know its pain;
Its path of fury o'er the plain;
Its cruelty athwart the hill;
Its never ending effort to obtain its will.
Oh how it violates desire for peace,
A soul's torment that does not cease
Until its icy, frozen breath
Has brought its victim
To the verge of death!

* * *

There may be hidden
In its wild perversities,
Redeeming qualities
Among its dire adversities,
That he who certifies
The final audit
May, at the last,
Bestow a well earned plaudit.
I know not of these things;
But of the grief and suffering it brings.
Hence, I beseech an understanding mind,
The truth about a northwest wind
I yearn to find.



CARDINAL
CALLING
TO SPRING



Cardinal, cardinal
Calling to spring,
High from the tip of an elm
Where you cling—
Red is your head, and your wings,
And your crest;
Red like a rose
Is the red of your breast;
Thou art aglow
Like a coal in a fire,
Burning with heat
Of an inward desire.

What dost thou see
From the limb where you swing
Waiting to waken
A somnolent spring?
Canst thou look into
The heart of a tree?
See its cold sap
Stir to new activity?
Watch the first pulse
Which may throb in a bud?
Vision the coming
Of nature's green flood?
(Continued on next page)

CARDINAL CALLING TO SPRING

(Continued from page 57)

Cardinal, confident,
Cheerful and bold,
Thou fearest not
 March's bluster and cold.
Warm is thy heart
 With the secret you bear,
Icicles glitter,
 'Tis little you care!
Soon you will whistle
 Above your own nest
Doing the singing
 You love to do best.

Cardinal, cardinal,
 Calling to spring,
I would fain join you
 Could I but sing.
Soon dainty blossoms
 Will broadcast their scent,
Bees will be humming,
 Rains make descent,
Spring will have spread
 Her soft curtains of green,
Glories of earth
 Will emblazon the scene.

Cardinal, cardinal,
 Calling to spring,
In every clime
 Let thy clarion ring.
After the winter
 Of chill and disease
Cometh, unfailing,
 Green leaf, gentle breeze.
This is the joy
 Of thy secret revealed,
Cardinal, calling
 For winter to yield.

A CHRISTMAS MELODY

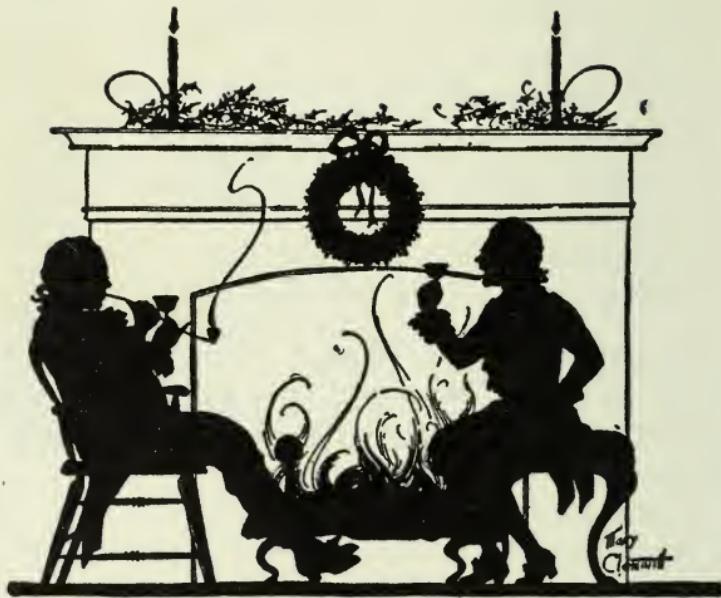
There's something fine and beautiful
About this time of year,
When we forget our selfish selves
And glow with Christmas cheer.
When doubts, and fears, and worries
Give place to kindly thought
The Christmas Spirit "gets us" and
A startling change is wrought.

There comes a joyous feeling
To fill our veins like wine.
It makes us lift our chins and step,
Indicative, but yet benign.
We lose our sneers, our envy,
Our hates, our hurts, our pride,
When love for friend and neighbor
Sweeps our reserves aside.

How sweet to have this spirit come
And neutralize our ways!
It clears the roughage from one's path
And shows how kindness pays.
Oh, that we might live wisely
And keep this spirit here
Abiding deep within our hearts
To rule through all the year!

Then, joyfully we raise a song,
A melody to Christmas-Tide;
To beauty of the Christmas Tree;
To lovely chimes, far flung and wide.
And, as we sing with bated breath,
Our grateful hymn to them,
We hold within our consciousness
The Babe of Bethlehem.





A CHRISTMAS TOAST

To thee and thine we give a toast,
To thine and thee at Christmas time—
 To legs o'lamb that come to roast,
To "little games" at which we boast,
To charming hospitality and hosts—
 We celebrate it all in rhyme.

So, here's to thine, thy atmosphere—
And here's to all thy goodly cheer—
May He who gives us friends to greet,
Pile richest blessings at our feet
Illumine days that might be drear,
For thee and thine the coming year.

DEAR FRIEND OF OLD



The days since last I clasped your hands,
And looked into your face
Seem multiplied, as desert sands,
And yet, how swift their pace!

The many miles that intervene
Of river, plain, and mountain trail
Stretch, oh, so endlessly between,
As distance woven in a veil.

The little cares that bind and hold
The housing of my spirit here,
Are bands of steel; (or are they gold?
For duty is both stern and dear.)

Not Time, nor Space, nor Cares That Be,
Can my desire dissever.
My thought is free to be with thee,
Dear friend, my friend forever.

TO A DISCARDED RAZOR BLADE

Keen was thy edge, well fashioned for its task,
And bright the sheen of polished steel;
Nor, didst thou hesitate, as from the mask
Thou stripped the creamy coating, to reveal
A countenance benign and real.
Each day thy humble duty thou fulfilled,
Forgetful that thou mightst have been
Part of the powerful girder that was willed
To span the flowing river; or within
A mainspring, delicate, refined and thin.
Gone, now, the keenness from thy edge,
An oxide dulls the sheen of former days.
Thy usefulness has passed. Upon that ledge
You rest a few brief hours. The changing ways
Of man consign you to an unknown maze.
E'en so, in human effort, we must meet
With keenest mind and brightest intellect
The duties laid upon us. All too fleet
The few short days. Too soon collect
The oxides, and our usefulness is checked.
But we, like thou, must give our best
Unmindful of the brilliant things that lure.
To conquer, bravely, small things is the test
That proves our metal worthy to endure
And fits us for a happiness more sure.

LINES FOR AN AUTOGRAPH ALBUM



I doubt not, when the years have fled
And much of life hath passed for us;
When locks of grey adorn your head
And you would old time friends discuss;
'Tis then these pages you will seek,
To stir once more, those mem'ries dear.
Of happy days. These pages speak,
And laughter comes (mayhap a tear).
So, hereunto I 'scribe my name
For you to find, in later days,
And gone are all your wilder ways,
When life for you is then more tame.

TO A SHUT-IN

This frame of ours, of finite clay,
Is for the nonce — but for a day.
Yet, it may house a spirit rare
With which no jewel can compare.
And though our bodies be confined
Within four walls, not so, the mind,
Which freely travels everywhere
Its understanding love to share.
On friendship's altar we would lay
A living wreath, this wondrous day.
Let, now, your thought wing wide, and far,
E'en to the bounds of evening star!





THE VOICE OF THE ROSE

Do you suppose a flower — a rose —
With power of speech is gifted?
May stories tell with magic spell
Until our hearts are lifted?

Its freshness sings of morning wings,
Of dew upon the clover,
Of misty air, a landscape fair,
Before the sun comes over.

Of its green leaves our fancy weaves
The mountain side and valley,
Where grandeur seems to meet our dreams
And kindred spirits rally.

Again, its scent, distilled and spent
By fairy chemists clever,
Calls for the bees, for flow'ring trees,
For balmy breezes, ever.

Its petals show in soft, rich glow,
The lights of sunset glory;
With shades that blend into the end
Of some day's wondrous story.

Thus, every grace recalls some place
Wherein our hearts grow tender.
Thus, doth the rose its thoughts disclose!
Praise to the rose I render.

A LITTLE CHILD

SHALL LEAD



Into the realm of crowded days
Comes one clear, sweet refrain
When peace and joy of childhood's ways
Supplant our fret and strain.
We lay aside our foolish care
To be as children are —
A candle lit: A childlike prayer:
One look for the Christmas star.
High hail, O tender frame of mind
Which makes of man a child!
Through love and faith again we find
Ourselves with joy beguiled.
We serve the prince of love and peace.
Kind thoughts race through our veins
The world is a rose. Release, release!
The child of Christmas reigns.

SERVE

Last night I could not yield my spirit
To the power that rules ones sleep.
I tried an old time method
"Counting flocks of jumping sheep."
The sheep I saw were jumpy,
But they simply made me laugh
With the sameness of their jumping
As they cleared the shepherd's staff!
When oodles of these woolly beasts
Five million (more or less)
Had passed my inner consciousness,
Still wakeful, I confess

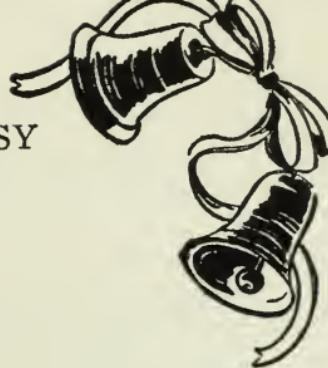
(Continued on next page)

SERVE
(Continued from page 65)

I fell into a reverie,
Forgot my need of sleep;
Forgot, withal, my artifice
Those countless droves of sheep.
I looked adown the long past years
To check my past career,
And what I found, I will be bound,
Gave no great cause to cheer.
But past is past, as east is east,
The dead in peace repose;
Why rake the leaves from some bare place
Where might have grown a rose?
So then, I cast my thoughts before;
The future one may mould.
What might good fortune offer me
Should I prove keen and bold?
I strained to read the coming days,
To see beyond the veil,
To see the signs along the ways
Where future wends the trail.
At last the darkness grew less dark.
Light multiplied apace.
Not far beyond a blazing sign
Chased shadows from my face.
It glittered in my eager eyes!
The answer now was mine
One flashing word, seen, but unheard
SERVE, spake this silent sign!
This solved the mystery of years
The future thus has planned
And coming days, with better ways
Must yield to this demand.



GOLDEN WEDDING PHANTASY



The passing days are pages
In the "History of Life,"
Each soul records its record
Be it pain, or joy, or strife.
In infancy, in childhood,
In adolescence queer,
In youth and older ages,
Whate'er the time or year,
We leave the imprint of our living
Upon the passing days
Which they retain forever
As the earnest of our ways.

This record is transparent,
Unseen by strangers eyes,
Is truly unapparent
E'en to the worldly wise.
To see and read it clearly
Requires a powerful lens,
The "lens of recollection"
Which only nature sends
To tie in with experience
And thus shape proper ends.

This record of the spirit
Must have its hills and dales,
Its times of lowly doings,
Its heights and lovely trails
Which blend into a picture
To give to life a spice
That stimulates the ego
When the spirit has been nice.

(Continued on next page)

GOLDEN WEDDING PHANTASY

(Continued from page 67)

When comes the time of union
Of matrimonial intent
How changed becomes the picture!
With peace from Heaven sent
The family takes the center
And becomes the major theme.
The stars take on more luster
They scintillate and gleam,
The old world seems much softer,
Life seems a pleasant dream.

The years pass ever quicker
Ones babes grow up, are men.
We begin to look behind us
To that time "A Way Back, When"
We begin to pass our duties
Into younger, eager hands
And accept a clearer vision
Which an aging eye but spans.

But we have compensation,
We enjoy our faith, our ease,
We submit with best of graces
To the joy of our release.
Let the children "go, and do it"
They enjoy a younger view
And they love to show and tell us
How much better they can do!

(Continued on next page)

GOLDEN WEDDING PHANTASY

(Continued from page 68)

Thus we live within our family
And it lives within us, too.
As our years have flowered and ripened
While we learned the false and true
We become "Grandpa" and "Grandma"
Many times, and each a thrill,
Thanking God for his affection
And the sweetness of His will.

Comes the day of Golden Wedding
Celebrating fifty years —
Five times ten, (Oh Time, you count 'em)
Filled with joy, and hope, and tears.
Turning back the record's pages
What of laughter do we find?
What of joy, of love, of kindness,
Does the picture bring to mind?

Great the privilege to be here!
Great the record of this home!
Great the emanations flowing
From its hearthstone, far to roam!
So we bring our gift, in honor,
With our love and kindest thought
Truly grateful for occasion
To express this love we ought.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA

811C729S

C003

THE SONGS THAT ARE UNSUNG CHAMPAIGN



3 0112 025322394

0

1

I.S.A.

2

3

4

5



